



THE ADVOCATE. DEAD IN THE DESERT.

A CHRISTMAS STORY, BY ALFRED R. CAL-
HOEN.

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tion.)

IT WAS the 24th of December, 1870. I was at that time in charge of a division of engineers who were making a survey of the Mojave desert from the Needles on the Great Colorado to Los Angeles on the Pacific.

For a month the officers and men had been eagerly looking forward to spending the Christmas holidays in the beautiful town of San Bernardino, on the other side of the Sierras.

On the 23d the wagons, pack mules and all the men, excepting three who remained back to complete some work with myself, crossed the range that separates the Mojave (pronounced Mo-hay-ee) desert from the flowering and fruitful paradise of southern California.

For six weeks we had been working in the desert, running lines, taking elevations and plotting our work at night by the smoky light of dried creosote and sapless sage brush. At times we were sixty miles from the nearest water, and when obtained the water was alkaline. Many of our pack mules, maddened by thirst, broke their ropes and wandered further into the desert to die.

Hard tack and bacon, and not too much of that, had been the only food of the men since we entered the desert, and so the most cheerful became grumpy, and the skin of the youngest grew dry and parched as that of a mummy.

We did our work in silence; even the officers came to speak in whispers, for our throats were dry and our lips cracked. Everything with moisture in it parched as if in a furnace.

The alkali on the level expanses looked like dazzling snow. The fantastic hills and mesas were crumbling and burning up in the forceful and persistent fires of oxidation. And amid all this the mirages would appear to mock us with lakes and streams in which were reflected the spires, domes and minarets of grand oriental cities, such as might have been built by the giant of architecture.

It was half past 5 in the afternoon, and we hoped to reach the pass by dark, where fresh horses would carry us to the town before midnight and Christmas day.

The man was of medium height, and the carbine, pistols and knife, still belted about his shrunken waist, indicated ability to resist. He was young. The long, dark hair and the silky mustache, through which the white teeth gleamed, told this. We opened the saddlebags and found \$200 in gold, the titles to a lot of California mining lands made out to one "Louis Bolton," and a bundle of letters tied with a blue ribbon.

In the middle of the bundle there were two vignettes—one that of a sweet faced, motherly lady, the other that of a beautiful girl, the name "Dora" at the bottom of the picture being surrounded by a delicately painted wreath of forget-me-nots.

These letters were dated at "The Elms," but, as the envelopes were destroyed, there was nothing to indicate the town, state or land. One read as follows, and, curiously enough, it was dated Christmas eve, a year before:

"MY DARLING BOY—I think of you at all times, but on Christmas eve you fill my heart so that I can think of nothing else, and if it were not for Dora, who has come to cheer me, I fear I could not stand it. 'Where is my Louis tonight?' This question haunts me, and I picture you out in the deserts of that wild land, homeless and friendless, still hunting for gold. Ah, my boy, come back! Better poverty than this awful anxiety. But we cannot be poor where there is so much love."

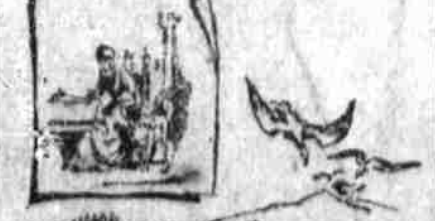
The letter continued at length in this vein, and it ended, "With love and kisses and blessings from Mother."

The next letter was also written at "The Elms" on Christmas eve, just a year before. I cannot pretend to quote it in full, but every line bespoke a noble womanhood and a profound love for the absent Louis.

"Do not think me impatient," she urged, "but I feel more and more that wealth does not mean happiness, and that the noblest manhood is not developed in the fierce struggle for gold. And then, my darling, the world is not so full of objects worthy our love that we can afford to live our brief lives apart."

"You must not think that I am indifferent to the self denial you exert and the sufferings you endure. I often fancy myself a man out seeking my fortune in that land of wonders; but I shudder when I think that you are surrounded by the dangers which my fancy conjures up."

"Nero, grown fat and lazy, lies at my feet as I write. I call your name, 'Louis! my Louis!' and the dog starts up and



STRETCHED SIDE BY SIDE rushes to the door with a joyous bark, but he hears no loved voice or footsteps, and he comes back dejected and lies down with a moan. Ah, dear boy, if that dumb brute mourns your absence, how must it be with you?"

And so the letter went on, full of love and gossip and gossip and love, till it ended with "Ever and forever, Dora."

We laid the body at the base of a volcanic cliff, and covered it with stones to save it from the vultures, then we distributed the arms and saddlebags, so as to save our horses, and resumed our march for the west, where the peaks of the Sierras showed like mistle

ore epics in the night of the setting sun. We found fresh horses at the pass, and then, although quite tired, we pushed on with all speed for the beautiful town of San Bernardino.

We were out of the desert. The odor of orange blossoms and perennial holotrops filled the air, and the ripple of water came to our ears whenever we reined in our horses.

There never was such a clear, glorious Christmas eve since the wise men from the east followed the star to Bethlehem and the manger in which lay the Christ child. Lights flashed through the groves, indicating the happy abodes of settlers, and now and then we heard a song that told of home, and the musical laughter of children whose special eve it was.

We found the hotel ablaze with light. There were wreaths and banners over windows and doors. There were flowers and



A WEDDING PRESENT. The faces of beautiful women and handsome men wherever one turned. From the wide parlors came the rhythmic fall of feet and the swell of music.

Here was Eden, but on asking the landlord the reason for these festivities, he replied:

"It is a wedding. Mr. Louis Bolton, whose bride and mother reached here yesterday from the east, was married tonight."

"Louis Bolton?" I repeated, and I thought of the dead man out on the desert.

"Yes; here he is. Let me introduce him."

The landlord introduced me to a tall, handsome young man, and I at once took him to my room and showed him the arms and saddlebags.

As soon as he saw the titles, he threw his arms about my neck, and to my surprise he kissed me and shouted:

"You have brought a wedding present that makes me rich, rich as any honest man wants to be!"

Briefly, Mr. Bolton's papers and much of his ready money had been stolen six months before by a Mexican desperado named Guan Chau. The man was chased into the desert where he perished, and so my sympathy was wasted.

I met the dear mother, and I met "Dora," that night, and I drank to their health and prosperity as the church bells rang in Christmas day.

To Have a Good Voice. If you have only the smallest quantity of voice, cultivate what you have, develop more and learn the art of singing. That is all you will find it necessary to do in order to become a very pleasing singer. I say "all," but it is a very large "all." It represents months and even years of close application, patient study, continued practice and care. But the adherence to them will give you—provided you have started with the requisite—a style which will be to yourself and your nearest and dearest, if not to the public, a constant source of refined pleasure.—Ladies Home Journal.

Christmas, 1891.

THREE CHRISTMAS CHIMES.

I.
Hearken! now the Christmas chime
Sings on earth its song sublime!
"See the town whose weary feet
Wander through the village street—
Doors are closed against the stranger.
See the child, the meek and lowly,
Christ the mighty, the all holy,
Sleeping cradled in a manger."

Sing your joy, O Christmas chime!
Let us keep the Christmas time.
Be the host of plenty doled,
Be the poor man's heart consoled,
Thus we keep the Christmas time.

II.
Hearken! still the Christmas chime
Sings on earth its song sublime!
"Wondering shepherds see the night
Flooded with celestial light—
Wondering hear the angel message:
Come and let us kneel before him,
Let us find him and adore him.
Peace on earth this child doth proffer."

Sing your joy, O Christmas chime!
Let us keep the Christmas time.
Let all strife and hatred cease,
Kindness live, good will and peace,
Thus we keep the Christmas time.

III.
Hearken! still the Christmas chime
Sings on earth its song sublime!
"Eagerly the Magi sped,
By the wondrous star beam led,
Gold and myrrh, and incense offer.
He brings most—yes, he the highest
Greatest unto God the Highest
Who a heart of love doth proffer."

Sing your joy, O Christmas chime!
Let us keep the Christmas time.
Love shall be the law to bind,
In one hand all humankind,
Thus we keep the Christmas time.

WHAT CHRISTMAS MEANS.

Celebrated as a Holy Day Since the Year
of Our Lord 98.

At midnight on the 25th of this month the birthday of the Saviour of mankind will have been celebrated for the seven-
teen hundred and ninety-second time,
for Christmas was first kept as a holy
day A. D. 98. We have no means of de-
termining the exact date of the Saviour's
nativity.

As to the year, preponderance of opin-
ion and of such evidence as we have
seems to favor that of 4 or 5 B. C. As
to the month, December is the height of
the rainy season in Judea, and, there-
fore, the fact as stated by the New Testa-
ment, that shepherds were watching their
flocks on its plains while stars were
shining in the heavens on the night of
the Saviour's birth, makes it extremely
unlikely that it could have occurred in
that month. Many learned treatises
have been written and plausible argu-
ments advanced to prove that it must
have taken place in October, but the
question will ever remain in abeyance.

For the first three centuries Christmas
was one of the most movable of all re-
ligious festivals. The Eastern church
observed Jan. 6 as the anniversary both
of Christ's birth and circumcision. But
in the fourth century Pope Julius I or-
dered an investigation of the matter,
and after long deliberation the theo-
logians of both the east and the west
united in appointing Dec. 25 to be kept
as Christ's birthday. It seems not im-
probable that in selecting Dec. 25 as the
date of the greatest event save one—the
crucifixion—in the world's history the
worthy fathers were influenced by a de-
sire to supplant the many heathen festi-
vals of the winter solstice, such as the
Saturnalia, or great festival of Saturn
and Ops, which began on Dec. 19 (or
after Caesar's reformation of the calen-
dar, on the 17th) and continued for seven
days.

This presumption is made more proba-
ble from the fact that for many centu-
ries the festivities of Christmas were
prolonged until "Twelfth night," Jan. 6,
and even till Candlemas day, Feb. 2,
while they usually began as early as the
night before All Saints' Day, or Hal-
loween, thus showing the desire of the
early fathers of the church to make the
heathen converts to Christianity feel
that they had lost nothing in harness
pleasure and enjoyment by the substitu-
tion of the Christian festival for the
heathen one.

Not only did the Romans observe this
period of the year as a time for mirth
and rejoicing, but many of our most
familiar Christmas usages are derived
from the old heathen festivals which
Christmas replaced. The custom of
giving Christmas presents, now so uni-
versally observed, was derived from the
old Roman Saturnalia or Feast of Saturn,
above mentioned, at which it was cus-
tomary for all the members of a house-
hold to offer gifts to one another.

The Yule clog, or log—the great stick
of timber placed in olden times upon the
Christmas fire—was derived from the
Saxon feast of Jul or Yul, at which a
similar piece of timber gave the principal
fire and the principal light. The
Yule clog and the superstitions con-
nected with it are among the most ven-
erable of Christmas associations. The
Yule clog that blazed in the vast halls
of the old English feudal barons of the
Middle Ages were huge trees, and we are
told that even just before the close of
the last century the mansion of an Eng-
lish gentleman residing near Shrews-
bury was totally destroyed by fire in
consequence of too large a Yule log hav-
ing been lighted on his hearthstone.
When the Yule clog was not all con-
sumed before dawn and burned on into
the light of Christmas day, its ashes were
carefully preserved until the next Christ-
mas eve.

The custom of decorating churches,
dwellings and places of business with
conspicuous, holly, laurel, bay and mis-
tletow at the Christmas season has also
heathen origin, being a perpetuation of
an observance of the old British Druids,
whose belief it was that kindly sylva-
spirits sought these ornaments of living
green and hovered near them, untouch-
ed and unharmed by slipping frost, until
the death of winter.

These ancient Druids attached much
importance to the mistletoe, treating it

with a peculiarly religious and mystic
character. They regarded it as an em-
blem of love and believed that it typi-
fied the beneficent feelings of their gods
toward mankind. It is doubtless to this
old Druidical association of the mistle-
toe with love that the English custom,
which still obtains, of enforcing the for-
feit of a kiss from any female who is
caught under a branch of it at Christmas
time is traceable.

By the celebration of Christmas, with
its grand liturgy, its magnificent music
and its pictorial and dramatic repre-
sentations of the principal events in the
life of him whose birth it commemor-
ated, the church sought to replace these
heathen festivities and to lift up the
minds of the people to something
higher and holier, though from the first
the day was regarded both as a holy
commemoration of a most sacred event
and as a mirthful, joyous festival. In
the Middle Ages the festive observances
of the day often so far overtopped its
more sacred features that the clergy
were frequently compelled to check the
unseemly merriment of their flocks.

The name of Christmas assigned to
the festival was derived from Christ and
the Saxon maesse or mass, and the two
words were combined to denote a special
service in honor of the birth of the Son
of God.

Probably one of the most generally
known of the old Christmas observances,
next to the giving of presents, is the
singing of Christmas carols. These were
popular canticles designed to replace the
ribald songs of the old heathen festivals,
and the custom of children and even
grown people going about from house
to house singing them at the door on
Christmas eve and being rewarded with
Christmas cheer and Christmas spend-
ing money is maintained in many parts
of England even at the present day.—
New York World.

TO A SPRAY OF MISLETOE.

[A CHRISTMAS SOLILOQUY.]
One year ago above the door
You hung, and she was there.
I kissed her then, because of you,
And then upon the stair



We sat and talked, because of you
My arm round her waist,
And then, because of you once more,
I kissed her. This is haste:
For her papa was up above,
And down the stair he came,
This was last year, and yet I'm still,
Because of you, quite lame.
—TOM MARSH.

The Truth About It.



Stuffer—What do you think? Jones
has actually invited me to dine with him
on Christmas day at his boarding house.
Dashaway—Hal! Did you ask him
if he had a grudge against you?
Stuffer—Yes. He said no; that he had
a grudge against the landlord.

CHRISTMAS APHORISMS.

Pope Telephorus, who died before the
middle of the second century, deserved
canonizing, if for nothing else, for insti-
tuting Christmas as a festival. It has
been celebrated ever since in all Chris-
tian lands, and has given more happi-
ness to children than any day in the
calendar. Making children happy is
the essence of Christianity.

Of late years, Christmas has become
far more a domestic and merry-making
holiday than a religious one. But it is
religious in the best sense, since it is a
day of peace and rest, and opens the
heart to human needs and human sym-
pathies.

The most satisfactory way to observe
Christmas is to do at least one good act
to some of our fellows. The conscious-
ness of doing such an act will inspire us
to do others, and so sanctify the day as
to make it ever welcome.

Christmas is always associated with
the good Jesus who, whether regarded
as God or man, was the purest, kindest,
noblest being that has walked the earth.
He has inspired love in saint and sinner,
in devotee and skeptic alike. Men may
wrangle about creeds; but about Jesus
and his beautiful life there can hardly
be any difference of opinion, for he pitied
all who suffered and strove to heal every
aching heart.

Christmas has gradually evolved out
of its theology and has come to stand for
a festival of love. Therefore all men
love it, for throughout the universe love
is born of love and is worshiped for its
own sake.

A clear conscience furnishes the
digestion for a Christmas dinner.
Christmas is a day to turn good in-
tentions. It is easier to turn good in-
tentions that or any other day than to
turn them for a single month.

No conscientious person can enjoy a
Christmas dinner if he knows any one
else within reach to be hungry. The
consciousness that we have given to
the needy provides us with the best
appetite.

Christmas was formed, in the first
theology, from Christ and among
these practical and traditional dog-
mats, it is that we should try to
imitate Christ in dealing with the
mankind, who are usually more or
unfortunate. By so dealing with
we should make all days Christmas.

It is better to be a Christmas turn
on the table than a Christmas guest
the table. JAMES HENRY BROWN.

OLD TIME RHYMES.

Some Quaint Christmas Verses of
Days.

It was Thomas Towner who, in
three and a half centuries ago, ad-
dressed all people to at—

Christmas play and make good cheer
For Christmas comes but once a year.
In his quaint book, entitled "Five D-
drede Pointes of Good Husbandry,"
but it was previous to this that the
first of these verses was issued, a mock play
of "Alexander and the King of Egypt,"
conclusion of which is given in the
"Collection of Proverbs," as follows:

Bounce Buckram, velvet dear,
Christmas comes but once a year,
And when it comes it brings good cheer,
But when it's gone, it's never the near.
[Note—Bounce Buckram is equivalent
"throw away your old clothes."]
Again, in a rare tract published
1633, are the lines:

Let dance and sing and make good cheer
For Christmas comes but once a year.
Herick, in his "Hesperides," treats
Of Christmas sports, the Wassail Song,
That took up, after Foxe's 15th rhyme,
Of Blind-man buff, and of the care
That young men have to shoe the Ma-
Of Ash-homes, in the which ye use
Husbands and wives to strive to do
Of crackling laurel, which fore-said
A plentiful harvest to your ground.

A writer in The Gentleman's Magazine
for May, 1784, tells us that "the drink-
ing the Wassail bowl or cup was,
probability, owing to keeping Chris-
mas in the same manner they had before
Feast of Yule. There was nothing
southern nations so much delighted
as causing ale, especially at this
season, when fighting was over. It
likewise their custom at all their
for the master of the house to fill a
bowl or pitcher, to drink out of it
himself, and then give to him the
next, and so it went around."
In Poor Robin's Almanac for 1677
the beginning of December, he ob-
serves:

Now blocks to cleave this time require
Against Christmas for to make good cheer,
which salutary advice is still to be in-
ed in northern latitudes.

The Yule log figures largely in all
poetry of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth
Fifteenth centuries, and of this
says:

Come, bring with you a boy,
My merry, merry boy,
The Christmas Log to the fire,
While my good dame, who
Hide ye all be free
And drink to your heart's desire,
"With the last year's brand
Light the new block," and
For good success in his spending,
On your pastimes play,
That sweet log may
Come while the Log is a-tending.
Drink, love, the strong beer,
Cut the white loaf here,
The while the meat is a-dre-dling,
For the rare mince pie
And the plums stand by,
To fill the pate that's a-kneading.
—ALBERT P. SOUTHW.

Can't Have Too Much of a Good Thing.



Clara—Did you get any good
card dear?
Maudie—Yes; and I have
mired that card so much that I
Swansdown when she was
year that I thought it was

A CAPE COD BEAR.

As modestly the maid said,
The garden bordered by a meadow,
She beams upon the sea,
A vision fairer than the moon.
Her hat, tipped slightly over her
Lends to her hair a pleasant glow,
No tailor's art contrived her gown,
But 'tis the very pink of womanhood.

It has no frills or furbelows,
But it is in the fashion's making,
And dainty, patient leather laces,
Peek in and out beneath its folds.
To fan her cheek the moth with
And bend to kiss the slender
The fragrant inner margin glows
Its perfume on her as the breeze.

The honors of the feathered
When she is near to lander,
The eddy, strong, its
The crimson ribbon curls
The garden's heart with joy to
And grass and tree and flower
Her footstep's melody, peevish
Her smile the morning blossoms,
And every leaf a chosen day
She carries sunshine in her eyes
And in her cheeks the red and

As the birds sing, we hear a
From within of all wilderness
For art has won her
She's a vision of womanhood